

I write in support of early voting for all Connecticut voters. CT is one of only seven states that does not allow their voters to cast a ballot prior to Election Day without an excuse and is one of only 16 states that requires an excuse for a voter to vote by absentee ballot. 79% of Connecticut voters support having the option to cast their ballots in person prior to Election Day with early voting according to a recent Secure Democracy poll.

Connecticut has one of the most restrictive and archaic voting laws in the country. According to Denise Merrill, Connecticut's former Secretary of the State, no issue generated more calls to her office than early voting. "In today's busy, modern world, voters want the flexibility of being able to vote early in person." Stephanie Thomas, our current Secretary of State, agrees.

In my hometown of Southbury, 13,101 votes were cast in a recent election, 44% by absentee ballot. Similar percentages were found in CT House District 69 (43.7%) and Senate District 32 (31.8%). Clearly, the pandemic impacted voters' choosing absentee ballots, but affording voters the opportunity to vote early should be everyone's goal. The CT League of Women Voters believes voters should be able to choose the method that works best for them: in-person early voting, in-person voting on Election Day, or no excuse absentee voting. Connecticut AARP's Advocacy Director, John Erlingheuser, agrees. "Connecticut should enact measures that encourage maximum participation in the electoral process by expanding the range of voting choices."

As a resident of Southbury, the town with the largest senior population in CT, I strongly feel our residents deserve early voting options. So do all CT voters.